

Thomas Pinckney to Andrew Jackson, February 17, 1814, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

THOMAS PINCKNEY TO JACKSON.

Fort Hawkins, February 17, 1814.

Sir , Your dispatch by Serjeant Ross has been received and he has been furnished with a fresh Horse to proceed to Charleston according to your instruction to him.

Your Letter of the 31st January states that you have inclosed Reports made to you by Genl. Roberts: only one report however accompanied that Letter, it was dated 30th January and related to the misconduct of the new Troops whom he had brought forward to make up the deficiency in his Brigade; the whole of whom deserted except Lieut: Davis and five men. I presume therefore that the Generals report containing a more favorable Statement and reporting to you the non-commissioned officers and privates whom he had brought forward and whom you pardoned; was omitted by mistake. It is however not material because as from your knowledge of the parties and all the circumstances attending the transaction you are enabled to form the most correct judgment of the Conduct which it will be expedient to pursue with respect to the four delinquent Captains and the disposition of those whom you have pardoned; I should if I had received it probably have done what I now do, which is to refer the whole business to your decision.

I received lately a letter from Governor Blount dated at Nashville, stating that you would be shortly re-inforced by Five thousand of the Tennessee Militia, these together with the 39th Regiment and your small Corps of Spies and Artillerists will amount to near Six thousand Men, a force certainly much greater than the occasion requires: that however would not

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be objectionable, because I think it the best policy to carry if possible an overwhelming force against your Enemy whereby the celerity with which the war might be terminated would be productive of oeconomy, and the superiority of force spare the effusion of blood: but I much fear that this large number of consumers will be out of proportion to your supplies, and thereby what was intended to add to your force, will in effect diminish it, and all the bad consequences you have already experienced for want of supplies be repeated. Nothing but this want has in my opinion prevented the Talipoosa Settlements from being destroyed by the Army under General Floyd, but they were so long languishing for want of the necessary transportation to carry every ounce of their provision and forage to a distance of 150 miles that their time will expire in a few days and they will leave to their successors to finish what they have begun. I must therefore repeat the recommendation contained in my letter of the 9th of this Month, that you apportion your force to the supplies you can command and not keep an useless consumer of provisions with your Army. Col: Williams' Regiment with the 1500 detached Militia, for which only I made a Requisition to the Governor of Tennessee would in my opinion have been a force better adapted to our circumstances than the numbers ordered into service by Governor Blount: but it is possible that his may have directions on that subject direct from the Government of the United States. You will however take care that they do not embarrass your operations and impede your progress.

I am of opinion with you that the best and most expeditious mode of conveying to the Mississippi Territory the reinforcements called for by General Flournoy¹ will be by the course of the Alabama, for which purpose you are therefore authorised for the present to detain them with you; but if your prospects of being supplied with provisions and the means of transportation should become more doubtful whereby your progress to the fork of the Rivers shall be impeded, you will be obliged to forward these reinforcements by the circuitous and tedious route of the Mississippi.

1 Cf. Flournoy to Jackson, Nov. 9, 1813, *ante*.

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I inclose the Copy of a Letter lately received from Mr. B McGhee the Contractor of the United States for the State of Tennessee, the supply he speaks of, was ordered to be furnished early in December when I sent one of my Aides to Tennessee for the purpose of promoting your supplies. You will of course communicate with Mr McGhee informing him of the quantity of provision with which you will require him to furnish you.

The North Carolina Troops will not probably arrive so as to enable the Army in this quarter to recommence operations in force until the beginning of March. Fort Hull their advanced post is near the military road leading hence to Fort Stoddart and within 15 miles of the Tuckabatche old Town, at the bend of the Talipoosa which Town is 15 miles distant from the confluence of the Rivers. Haithlawauke the principal rendezvous of the Talipooseans is 9 miles lower down the River and about 60 miles below the Ocfuskee Town you intended to attack on the 22nd ulto.

If you should be able to move down the Fork at an earlier period, you must of course destroy the Okfuskee Settlements on your route and it is probable that such of their Warriors as shall not be either killed or made Prisoners, will take refuge at Haithlawauke: it will then be desireable that you should make a short halt at Tuckabatchie old Town, whence you may be joined in a few hours by Col: Milton of the 3rd U S. Infantry with between two and three hundred Regulars and four Pieces of Artillery and perhaps five or six hundred South Carolina Militia and some red Warriors; this accession of force and particularly the information they will be able to give of the Enemy and local positions, will enable you more effectually to secure all the hostile Indians who may remain near the confluence of the rivers.

You will as soon as you shall have passed the Ocfuskee Towns send repeated information by runners passing down the East side of the River to Col: Milton to inform him of your progress and intentions.

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The Kialigee Indians who are situated between the Ocfuskees and Haithlewaulees, have been permitted to enjoy a kind of neutrality, are friendly to us, and have conveyed intelligence of the Enemy's movements. You may find them useful in the same way.

I have the honor to be